

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The specification on page 7 has been amended to delete the word "co-pending".

Claims 1-4 and 6-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based at least in part on Weiberle et al. (EP 1147929) in combination with one or more additional references. Applicant respectfully traverses each of these rejections as Weiberle et al. is not prior art. Weiberle et al. is not prior art because it has a publication date of October 24, 2001, whereas the present application was filed on March 7, 2001 and claims the priority of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/187,552 filed March 7, 2000. Accordingly, each of the foregoing rejections based on Weiberle et al. should be withdrawn.

With specific reference to the Examiner's assertions regarding a purported motivation to combine the applied references at pages 2-4 of the present Official Action, the Examiner has failed to set forth a prima facie case of obviousness and instead appears to be relying on inherency to weave together the references, based on Applicant's specification, to discover the limitations of the present claims. However, based on the foregoing, Weiberle et al. is not prior art and the rejection should be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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